

Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method for performing beating-heart closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel, comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated

stabilizer connected to a tool; and

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the

target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating, said performing

comprising stapling the graft vessel to the target vessel and creating an opening

in the target vessel.

2-4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 57, further comprising moving said anvil against the wall of the target vessel.

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, wherein said performing a proximal anastomosis comprises:

placing an end of a tool substantially normal to the target vessel, said tool holding the graft vessel; and

deploying an anastomosis device to attach the graft vessel to the target vessel.

7. (original) The method of claim 6, further comprising splitting said tool to release the graft vessel.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said creating comprises utilizing a sub-xyphoid approach.
9. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said creating comprises utilizing an intercostal approach.
10. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising measuring the distance between the proximal anastomosis site and the distal anastomotic site with a vein measuring device inserted through at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity.
11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising deploying a trocar port in at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity.
12. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said gaining access comprises creating an opening in the pericardium, wherein the opening extends substantially from the aorta to the apex of the heart.
13. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said gaining access comprises accessing the intrapericardial space.
14. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said performing a distal anastomosis further comprises attaching a clamp assembly to the distal end of the graft vessel.
15. (original) The method of claim 14, further comprising slicing the distal end of the graft

vessel.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 14, further comprising connecting the said clamp assembly to a ~~distal anastomotic~~ said tool.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 45, further comprising viewing the anastomosis sites during the procedure.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising performing at least one additional distal anastomosis.

19-44. (canceled)

45. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising
performing a proximal anastomosis between the graft vessel and another target vessel
while the heart is beating, utilizing a tool inserted through at least one point of
entry.

46. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 45~~ A method for performing beating-heart
closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,
comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated
stabilizer connected to a tool;

performing a proximal anastomosis between the graft vessel and another target vessel
while the heart is beating, utilizing a tool inserted through at least one point of
entry wherein said proximal anastomosis is sutureless; and
performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the
target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating.

47. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said distal anastomosis is sutureless.

48. (canceled)

49. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 48,~~ A method for performing beating-heart
closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,
comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated

stabilizer connected to a tool, wherein said stabilizing includes securing the

integrated stabilizer to the heart ~~wherein said securing includes by~~ deploying at

least one clip from said integrated stabilizer to engage the heart;

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the

target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating; and

~~further comprising~~ removing at least one said clip after said performing.

50. (currently amended) The method of claim 48 1, wherein said ~~securing~~ stabilizing includes exerting a force against both the heart and the chest wall, whereby said force restricts motion of the heart.

51. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the integrated stabilizer includes a shell having an open space therein.

52. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 51,~~ A method for performing beating-heart closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,
comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated
stabilizer connected to a tool; and

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the
target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating, wherein said tool is
positioned substantially within said open space of said integrated stabilizer
during said performing.

53. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said integrated stabilizer has a substantially oval perimeter configured to contact the heart.

54. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method for performing beating-heart closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,
comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated

stabilizer connected to a tool, wherein said integrated stabilizer includes an
integrated endoscope; and

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the
target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating..

55. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method for performing beating-heart
closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,
comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated

stabilizer connected to a tool, wherein said integrated stabilizer includes an
integrated light source; and

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the
target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating .

56. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising a linkage connected to
said integrated stabilizer, wherein said linkage extends out of at least one point of entry during
said stabilizing and said performing.

57. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method for performing beating-heart
closed-chest surgery on a patient to connect a graft vessel to at least one target vessel,

comprising:

creating at least one point of entry into the thoracic cavity;

gaining access to a distal anastomotic site;

stabilizing the heart by inserting through at least one point of entry an integrated

stabilizer connected to a tool, wherein said tool includes an anvil; and

performing a distal anastomosis between an end of the graft vessel and the side of the

target vessel with said tool while the heart is beating, and wherein said

performing comprises inserting said anvil through the wall of and into the

lumen of the target vessel.